

Constitutions from enacting legislation in conformity with the Federal statute. Had these Constitutions been consulted in time by the authorities at Washington, it would have been easy to make the necessary changes. As the case now stands, however, either the Act must be amended at the next session of Congress, or constitutional amendments must be secured in half the States and possibly in a majority of them.

"Emergency" was the excuse two years ago, when Congress passed hundreds of bills which its members could not have studied, or even read. Against the plea of emergency, the next Congress should set the adage that haste makes waste. Probably the Administration's social-security program needs more than anything else at the present moment a planing down of rough edges that will take it safely through the Supreme Court. For that tribunal has little patience with careless legislation.

Note and Comment

A Full Literary Issue

IT is somewhat of an innovation for AMERICA to devote all of its articles, outside editorial matter, to the literary scene. But it is an experiment, the reactions to which will be watched with interest. It is a humble hope, however, that the issue may prove entertaining, even provocative, to all our readers. What a lawyer like Louis Haggerty says of evil literature before the law may interest the layman who is the victim of it; those who never go to a play—but mayhap read one once in a while—will be stimulated by Mr. Skinner's realistic approach; the novel comes out unusually well for novel readers at the hands of Francis Connolly; and veteran readers will note with welcome surprise that years of sojourn in the Hollywood Wasteland have not dimmed the zest of Myles Connolly. In fact, the Literary Editor was contemplating a counterblast to his seeming pessimism, but instead he decided to present the first gleaming of the votes for outstanding American Catholic writers as he has received them in his plebiscite. It is no more than a grim coincidence that this appears in the same issue with Mr. Connolly—either as an answer or as a confirmation. As for the Editors, they feel that Mr. Connolly is after all an optimist of the first water; he actually believes that there are writers now living amongst us who could fill for him week after week the magazine which he so lovingly dreams about. Maybe he is right, at that. Who knows? He is right at least in opining that it would have a circulation of several hundred thousands.

Daniels on Mexico Again

IF American governmental action in favor of Catholics, which the whispers have it is satisfactory to the American Bishops, is really going on, it is obvious that our Ambassador in Mexico has not heard about it. Under

the patronage of Señor Portes Gil, of unsavory fame, he and some other diplomatic agents in Mexico, notably the Minister from Spain, Don Emilio Iglesias, completed a junket around the country in the famous Presidential train. Banquets, speeches, parades, exhibitions of Socialistic education, and other evidences of progress in Mexico were staged for the open-eyed diplomats. Everything was fine; there was no hitch in the stage management. When the diplomats came back to Mexico City, they paid their hosts with what the Government propaganda sheet calls "valuable and flattering opinions." It was a joint declaration, signed by Mr. Daniels also. One passage in it is worthy of note: "We were pleased to observe, wherever we went, abundant proof of the fact that Mexico of today advances toward its goal, the improvement of those institutions intended for the welfare of a whole people. . . . Public officials have put us in touch with the aspirations and progress of a nation moving forward steadily and satisfactorily." Mr. Daniels is said to be a Christian, though his Spanish colleague is not. We do not know whether or not he has learned Spanish yet, so maybe he did not know what he was signing, but of all the direct outrages committed by him against the consciences and convictions of Mexican and American Catholics this is so far the worst. The American Ambassador goes out of his way to tell the Communistic government of Cárdenas that its policy is satisfactory! The charge was made by Father Coughlin on November 24 that Mr. Roosevelt is trying to bring Calles back to Mexico, and has not yet been denied at this writing, five days later. What kind of a tragedy-comedy are they playing with us poor deluded Catholics?

Witnesses" "Jehovah's

OUR readers will remember the warnings issued widely by the Catholic press concerning the activities on the radio of a certain Judge Rutherford, who broadcasts his attacks on religion, and in particular on the Catholic Church, over more than 300 stations weekly. Catholics in various localities succeeded in persuading their home stations to suppress this menace to good will. More recently, Rutherford's followers, under the name of "Jehovah's Witnesses," have got into the news for refusing to allow children to salute the flag. Catholics have always held that this man should not be tolerated, but it remained for a British Government commission to sound a real warning about the movement. Investigating recent disorders in Northern Rhodesia, the commission finds that "the teaching and literature of the Watch Tower movement [Rutherford's movement] bring civil and spiritual authority, especially native authority, into contempt; that it is a dangerously subversive movement." In Rhodesia, it also "developed indecent practices," and it was felt that it should be taken seriously. In reporting this finding, the New York *Sun* remarks that the funds of the movement are "almost limitless," and that where they come from is "something of a mystery." All this shows that the opposition of Catholics to Rutherford was based on a sound instinct of civic as well as religious principle.

Visiting Mr. Redfern

NO invitations, either to his friends or to the general public, have been sent out by Paul Redfern, now sojourning in the jungle somewhere in Dutch Guiana. So there is no trouble about R.S.V.P's. However, there prevails a sentiment that Mr. Redfern would not be averse to visitors, indeed, might be satisfied to be brought back to that machine-age civilization which let him down with an airplane crash hundreds of miles from nowhere. The difficulty is that Mr. Redfern's present address is neither in the telephone book nor the Social Register. All that the United States Department of State knows about it is that a school teacher and medical missionary named M. A. Melcherts, "who says he is stationed at the Roman Catholic Mission at Drie Tabbetjes on the Tapahoni River, three days from Poeloe Goedoe and eight days from the town of Albina on the lower Marowynne," learned from an Indian named Kapan that there was a white man crippled, who came out of the sky, somewhere on the Paloemeu River, and the Indian had seen the machine, and that a chief named Sapakunu had helped the white man out of it after it had crashed. Now the job consists in getting up the little party to visit Mr. Redfern. Easy enough, for it is only eight days from Drie Tabbetjes to Granbori, and nine days to Apatma Pataja (not on the map), and then you walk ten days to the Paloemeu River, down which you take a three days' trip. About 75 days for the round trip. Don't forget to take mirrors, knives, etc., for the Indians, and a hammock for Mr. Redfern. Major Willis Taylor, the more power to him, says he will run up there and do the friendly act. Only it is nice to know that for once a Catholic medical missionary takes the place of the Social Register.

Mexican Record

EVERY little while somebody wishes to ascertain whether or no there "really is persecution of the Church in Mexico." Our Methodist brethren recently went on record with the opinion that the continuance of the present regime and its policies is essential for the welfare of "Evangelical religion." While we believe that Evangelical religion, indeed Methodism itself, needs no support from such a source, it is interesting for the ordinary man in the street to check up from time to time and see just what this persecution consists in, and just what the Methodists consider necessary to have done in Mexico so as to support Evangelism in the United States. The fourth in the series of four-page pamphlets issued by the Baltimore Archdiocesan Confederation for the Defense of Religious Liberty in Mexico, gives some very apposite information, and may be obtained by writing to the Rev. Louis C. Vaeth, 415 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, Md. From it we learn that some of the grounds alleged for either putting people to death or afflicting them with prison terms or confiscation or both in Mexico are such things as: defending religious freedom; defending freedom of education (like the students shot in Guadalajara,

February 28, 1935, for presenting a protest against Socialistic education); for simply being Catholic, like the men and ladies who were arrested, brutally tortured, and brought tied with ropes to the Penitentiary of Mexico City on June 10 and 11 of this year merely for the crime of being faithful Catholics;—for praying and worshiping, for defending children against corrupting education, for refusing themselves to corrupt children, for refusing to "endorse" the persecutors, for helping the Church herself. Factual information is the best answer to the ignorant. The facts are here provided from an authentic source.

Parade Of Events

JUST how many people should be killed by autos? The question provoked sharp differences of opinion. . . . The present trend is to kill 36,000 a year (adolescents and non-adolescents). . . . The National Safety Council planned to eliminate 38,000 deaths over a five-year period. If this succeeds only about 28,000 people will be annually knocked over and killed. . . . The plan would introduce too abrupt a change in American social customs, one critic felt. . . . Another safety group aimed to cut auto mortality in half—in which event a mere 18,000 would be annually slaughtered. This group was regarded as composed of un-American extremists. . . . The Roosevelt boys were said to favor the safety drive. . . . The crime budget was being balanced. An average day in seventy of the larger American cities would bring forth four murders and three manslaughters. Among the headhunters of the South Sea isles the figures were considerably lower. The South Sea isles were not yet completely civilized, however. . . . Strange toothbrush behavior spread havoc. In Brooklyn 3,000 toothbrushes, without the slightest warning, exploded and hurled seven men to the street. . . . The oft-discussed point as to the legality of mixing pieces of glass in corn-beef sandwiches was decided by a New Jersey court. The court opposed the practice, awarded damages to a glass-sandwich eater. . . . How tense the international situation was remained in doubt. Some experts said it was more tense; others said it was not more tense.

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WILFRID PARSONS Editor-in-Chief	JOHN LA FARGE JOHN A. TOOMEY
PAUL L. BLAKELY GERARD B. DONNELLY	FRANCIS X. TALBOT WILLIAM I. LONERGAN Associate Editors
FRANCIS P. LeBUFFE, Business Manager	

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The Audience Is King

RICHARD DANA SKINNER

LET us recognize from the outset that what we call the "theater" is an emotional state produced by a play upon an audience. No discussion, inquiry, or surmise concerning the "theater" can have the least value if it fails to accept this simple and fairly obvious premise. The theater of today is not the aggregate of the plays being currently produced. The audience is the other (and usually forgotten) half. We all know that the dress rehearsal of a play before an empty house does not bring "the theater" to life. Not until an audience has begun to identify itself with the characters of a play and to accept the illusion that it is witnessing a reality does the magic life of the theater come into being.

In this sense, the "theater" is born and the "theater" dies every night. After this birth and death, there are only actors, play manuscripts, scenery and properties, electric lights, a stage and empty chairs before it, and, scattered far and wide, men and women who were part of the living theater a few hours before and are now speaking or thinking of its brief life only as a memory.

To put it another way—the audience is king of the theater, and lucky the play that can catch the king's conscience! That is why we cannot get far in discussing the trends of the theater without inquiring into the trends of thought and emotion and taste and morality among audiences. The play itself has little or no power of leadership or persuasion. That is the part of oratory and the pulpit or of the written word. A clever dramatist—a Bernard Shaw, for example—can wedge in here and there a few words of deliberate special pleading. But even the cleverest dramatist must make sure, first, that he has completely won the emotional response of his audience by making it accept the reality and integrity of his characters and of the situation in which he has placed them. To catch a sleeping conscience, he must first ensnare emotions—and emotions are not easily stirred by anything but the familiar patterns of life. A common illustration of this is the play about the artist who sacrifices everything to his art. The audience usually fails to respond. The emotional pattern of the artist is too unfamiliar, too special, and not commonly understood. A play about the anguish of a scientist at not being able to prove the quantum theory would have a similar fate. But the story of a mother compelled to choose between saving the life of her husband or that of her child would be understood and accepted in every known age of mankind.

When theatrical producers say they must "give the public what it wants," they are coming very close to a statement of fact. The correct statement would be that they must "give the public what it understands." For example, if we could imagine a dreary community composed entirely of physicists, we could imagine a successful play about the quantum theory. We can imagine also a

Turkish audience of fifty years ago becoming highly excited over a play in which the heroine dropped her face veil before strangers—becoming more excited, in fact, than a modern Broadway audience over a play about nudists. For Broadway tolerates freaks, but the old-school Turk could not tolerate the immodesty of an exposed feminine mouth.

The theater then comes to true life only in an atmosphere of familiar patterns. It changes in moral and emotional content only as those patterns change in the community itself. There is such a thing, of course, as acquired taste in theatrical fare, but usually in minor details. The Englishman may occasionally change the sauce for his roast beef, but he shows a fundamental (and fortunate) stubbornness in not changing to a cannibal diet. Any violent—and successful—change in theatrical material or themes is pretty apt to be the result rather than the cause of an underlying change in public attitude itself. The public accepts in the theater only what it already understands in real life or is eagerly trying, in a mass sense, to understand.

This plain and neglected fact holds certain definite implications for the American theater of the immediate future. It implies, first of all, the continued popularity of plays dealing with simple, broadly understood emotions. Sierra's "Cradle Song" continues to be a huge popular success whenever and wherever produced. The market will certainly not be closed to playwrights who prefer to deal in simple fundamentals. In fact, the social impact of the depression has brought many a restless mind to an entirely new affection for homely simplicities. This phase may last no longer than New Year's resolutions, but it is of the very essence of the current mood. In the hectic prosperity of the 'twenties, a screen revival of "Little Women" might have invited a measure of scorn. Today even the sophisticates tolerate it, and the public embraces it. A casual phrase may mean much. Today, more and more, we hear the words *refreshingly simple*. A public re-freshening of old values traces itself clearly among the confused tides of the times.

But the beguiling quality of old values may have nothing more to it than nostalgia, once the intellectual basis for those values is discarded. As a nation, we are becoming emotionally more conservative by the minute but intellectually more chaotic. The emotional radicals of the 'twenties at least had something resembling a positive creed. They took the pains to rationalize their desires into a system of beliefs—a belief in free love or in companionate marriage or, if you please, in the financial piracy of the New Era. Today, only small parts of the population bother to excuse or explain their actions by a philosophy or a moral creed. If they practise simple virtues, it is merely because they are tired of complex vices and need a rest. It is part of their in-

stinctive search for emotional security after perilous days. There is less passion to explain or justify the sins of passion. Intellectual amorality—due, perhaps, to mental fatigue—is replacing rationalized immorality. In a longer perspective, of course, the outlook is not so dismal as this statement suggests. The intellectual forces are mustering strength beneath the surface. The desire to believe in something is seeding beneath the crust of indifference. But for the immediate future we must expect a wide and indifferent public toleration for plays that have no perceptible moral background, and especially for that curious type of play in which the characters end by doing the right thing for the wrong reasons or for no sound reason at all. "The Wind and the Rain," of fairly recent memory, is an excellent example of this kind of intellectual bankruptcy.

The future of the American theater—let us say, over the next decade—depends very largely on whether or not Spengler is right in assuming that America (and that means the American audience) is part and parcel of the dying culture of Western Europe. If he is right, moral decadence is likely to run its full course, interrupted only by phases of emotional religiosity. But the evidence and historical experience seem to point to the other way. New cultures, and the creative power that goes with them, usually emerge from new combinations of old human materials. America today is slowly absorbing and transforming the racial and emotional and intellectual strains of Europe and Asia, even as Europe, in the centuries preceding the flowering of the thirteenth century, was

absorbing and transforming the elements of Greek, Roman, Arabian, and barbarian thought and emotion.

We must not forget that the outward expressions of the new Gothic civilization sprang into being almost overnight (between 1200 and 1260) after a long period in which Europe had apparently done little more than copy the externals of declining Rome. In the sheer novelty of the American admixture, we have the hope of something quite as new in world history as the first startling appearance of Gothic towers over the plains of France.

More than two decades have passed since the outbreak of the war that climaxed Europe's decline into materialism. In the first of those two decades we saw a great change in the American theater. Eugene O'Neill in his earliest phase was a symbol of it. From the smug simplicity of the plays of 1914 to the O'Neill poems of turmoil in 1924, the span was terrifying and revolutionary. The second decade was less fruitful of change. The third decade, immediately ahead of us, promises a resumption of the struggle to discover ourselves and our true cultural inwardness. Its emotional conservatism and its intellectual instability will, I think, be merely the masks for a deeper gathering of forces—a sort of prelude to maturity. O'Neill, in his later phases, may again be its symbol, as the scourge of our besetting youthful sins of possessiveness and greed. If he (or another of equal stature) succeeds in catching the conscience of the King—the American audience—then we may gather fresh hope not alone for the American theater, but for all that the theater mirrors of the emerging soul of a people.

Obscene Literature in New York Law

LOUIS C. HAGGERTY

SECTION 1141 of the Penal Law of the State of New York provides that a person who sells or publishes any book, picture, drawing, photograph, figure or image which is "obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, indecent, or disgusting" is guilty of a misdemeanor which is punishable by imprisonment of ten days to one year, or by a fine of \$50 to \$1,000 or by both fine and imprisonment.

While a grand jury may pass upon an alleged violation of the law and indict the offender, in which event he will be tried in the Court of General Sessions by a jury, it is a commonly accepted practice, in New York City at least, to make an arrest and bring the defendant before a City Magistrate for a hearing. The Magistrate may hold the defendant for trial before the Court of Special Sessions or may dismiss the complaint. If the defendant is held for Special Sessions, he will be tried by a court of three judges.

In the majority of the prosecutions under Section 1141, the sale of the book or article is admitted and the sole question for determination is whether the book is "obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, indecent, or disgusting." It would seem, and the Court of Appeals of this State

has already held, that these are words in common use and that every person of ordinary intelligence understands their meaning. But the application of the statute has been limited, to some extent at least, by the constructions placed upon it from time to time.

The English Courts have held that the test of an obscene book is whether the tendency of the matter charged as obscenity is to deprave or corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influence and who might come into contact with it.

An early holding by the Court of Appeals was to the effect that a proper test of obscenity with reference to a painting or statue was whether the motive was "pure or impure, whether it is naturally calculated to excite in a spectator impure imaginations and whether the other incidents and qualities, however attractive, were merely accessory to this as a primary or main purpose of the representation."

But this construction and the force and effect of the statute was limited, to some extent, by a later expression of opinion by one of the judges of the Court of Appeals that it was apparent from the context of the statute that it is directed "against lewd, lascivious and salacious or

obscene publications, the tendency of which is to excite lustful and lecherous desire."

This latter interpretation has been followed by other courts on many occasions, although the extent to which it limits the statute has been questioned.

It has furthermore been held, and it seems to be the generally accepted doctrine, that a book or writing must be considered as a whole, even though it contains many paragraphs "which taken by themselves, are undoubtedly vulgar and indecent" and which, printed by themselves, "might as a matter of law come within the prohibition of the section." This doctrine is important and significant. It affords to an author the opportunity to inject indecent language into a book based upon a theme or motive in itself unobjectionable.

The problems vary with the type of book claimed to be obscene within the meaning of the statute. So-called classics, such as "Arabian Nights," "Decameron" and writings of Voltaire have been protected by the courts in commercial and non-criminal cases, although it is readily conceivable that the sale of books such as these may well be brought within the provisions of the statute under certain circumstances, as offering cheap editions to minors.

Medical books and books of like character do not come within the provisions of Section 1141 if sold in a legitimate market. Thus the Court of Appeals has held that "a medical book for students and medical men may contain illustrations suitable and proper as a part of the work, but which if detached and published alone for circulation, might be deemed indecent within the meaning of the statute."

On the other hand, a problem is presented by the sale in the public market of "medical" and "scientific" books dealing with anthropology and sexology. Within the past few months, a Federal jury convicted a person charged with sending circulars in great numbers through the mails, advertising books on the science of sex. In other cases it was held that books determined to be of a serious scientific and medical nature were not obscene within the meaning of the Federal statutes. No disagreement can be found with the doctrine as such, although opinions may vary as to the application of the doctrine to the books under consideration by the Court, e.g., the decision of the Circuit Court in *U. S. v. Dennett* reversed a conviction by a jury. It should be noted furthermore that the Federal statutes are not so embracing in their terms as the New York statute.

It is interesting to note, however, that in the mail case mentioned above, the Federal judge, quoting from an earlier decision, charged the jury in part:

In judging of the tendency of the publications to deprave and corrupt the mind, or to excite lustful or sensual desires (which are the tests of obscenity and lewdness), you should consider the effect that the publications would have on the minds of that class of persons whom the statute aims to protect, and the liability of the publications to get into the hands of that class of persons, rather than the effect such publications would have on people of a high order of intelligence, and those who have reached mature years, who by reason of their intelligence or years are steered against such influence.

It would seem that no matter how gross a book may be, it can always find persons eager and anxious to defend it. The Court of Appeals has held that it does not require an expert in art or literature to determine whether a picture is obscene or whether printed words are offensive to decency and good morals, and that these are matters which fall within the range of ordinary intelligence. This doctrine, however, has not been followed in every instance by the lower courts, and weight has been given to testimonials with respect to a book under attack.

Opinions differ widely in the courts as to the application of the statute. It would seem also that the Appellate Courts of this State construe the statute more strictly than courts of original jurisdiction. A magistrate in New York County dismissed a complaint based upon a certain book, on the ground that it was a book about dirt but not a "dirty" book in itself. The distinction so made can no doubt exist but opinions will vary as to its application. A lender for rental of the self-same book was held for Special Sessions by a magistrate in Queens County and was convicted. The conviction was unanimously affirmed by the Appellate Division and subsequently affirmed by the Court of Appeals, two judges dissenting.

Another Magistrate has construed the statute to apply to "dirt in the raw." He applied the doctrine in dismissing a complaint with respect to a well-translated book by a well-known French author, and in holding for Special Sessions the defendant in a case involving a book by a modern American author of the "forthright" language type. This construction constitutes, seemingly, a further limitation upon the statute. The fact that "dirt" is written with a style and charm beyond literary criticism may in itself serve to make it far more objectionable than a book in which the "dirt" is expressed in language without literary quality.

The problem is a serious and an important one. The situation, however, is by no means hopeless. There have been many convictions under the statute although they do not receive the publicity given to unsuccessful prosecutions. A recent conviction by a Federal jury, already referred to, was followed shortly by a plea of guilty entered by another offender. The recent affirmance of a conviction by the Court of Appeals will no doubt have a highly beneficial effect.

But an aroused public opinion expressed by organized action under intelligent supervision is necessary. What the Legion of Decency has accomplished with reference to the motion-picture industry should be accomplished with respect to pornographic literature. Up to the present, however, the average Catholic layman has given no time or attention to the problem. An organization exists in the City of New York for the primary purpose of suppressing indecent literature. Its report of contributions received in 1934 shows that out of a list of contributors, which were less than 190 in number, twenty-two were priests, and, seemingly, about five were members of the Catholic laity. The figures speak for them-

selves. An embarrassed silence on the part of the laity would seem to be indicated.

What can the Catholic do with reference to the problem? It is difficult to give a complete answer to the question but a simple matter to make a partial reply. The sale of indecent literature is a commercial proposition, purely and simply. So long as there is money to be made in selling indecent books, for so long a period of time will they be sold. Obviously the most effective method of supporting the industry is to buy or to rent

an indecent book. It is equally obvious that the most effective method of attacking the industry is to refrain from buying or renting an indecent book. After all, this is an obligation imposed upon Catholics by conscience.

This step is necessary in itself, but hardly sufficient if the industry is to be checked and curbed. It is to be hoped, however, that the average Catholic will not be content merely with the performance of a duty imposed upon him, but will take such active steps to combat the evil as his time and circumstances will permit.

Tactics

MYLES CONNOLLY

I HAD the good fortune the other night to dine (in the best Catholic tradition) with two outstanding Catholic writers. We had some rich and entertaining hours together. The restaurant, a somewhat shiny spot, was practically empty, and our waiter practically asleep. But we talked as if to band music (not always in key) and afterwards on my way home I was satisfied, feeling we had peopled the empty place with the souls of celebrities, and filled it with the fires of great causes, and, even, stirred the sleepy waiter to his emotional bottom. I do know that when I complained, in my humble fashion, of the size of one of my drinks, the waiter brought another larger one. No New York waiter has ever been known to do that before.

It was, for me, a good evening. It is possible I enjoyed it more than my two friends. For one thing, I make a little more of friendship than they do (at least, I'm noisier about it) and, for another, I had just returned from some years in a young and vivid but indifferent land where there are arguments but no real issues, where there are skirmishes but no battles (save the individual's everlasting private battle) and here I found the Nineteen-Hundred-Years War still going on vigorously as ever, and was probably a little excited about it. I had been so long behind the lines it seemed almost as if this were my first visit to the front.

Now, this night, our talk fell in its catch-breath moments to that dullest and most constant of subjects, the Catholic Writer. Once, years back, when I was stumbling about with my sputtery old blunderbuss (which I hardly knew how to use) I used to like, in my conceit, to describe Catholic writers as the shock troops of the Great Advance. After some years of killing sparrows and nearly blowing my own head off, I hung up the blunderbuss. I came to the conclusion that the Catholic Writer was a shock trooper primarily in my and his own ardent fancy, while, actually, he was little more than a stenographer at General Headquarters far, and unimportantly, behind the front. I began to cry out with Mr. Brisbane: Airplanes are what we need, gentlemen, airplanes!

This night, I cried out pretty much the same cry to my two friends. I felt, in my cry, I had said something

arresting and important. I felt, even, I had solved a problem.

It was not until the next morning, when I was quietly reading a very good newspaper and watching, between sips of coffee, several Park Avenue chauffeurs stamping around in their hundred-and-fifty-dollar overcoats, that I felt a little disturbed over the discussion of Catholic writers the night before. I felt I, at least, had been futile. I felt the discussion had been in the usual heroic vein (witness the rhetorical cry for airplanes) and I said to myself: Why don't you try to be honest and lucid and fair? Here you are reading a reasonably factual newspaper and looking out, in odd moments, at reasonably factual evidences of worldly success. Why don't you approach the problem of the Catholic Writer in some sort of factual, morning state of mind? Put away the night fever and enthusiasm. Face the problem, state it frankly, if you can, and then, if you have some solution, give it. For once in your life, give up the shouting and waving of the hands.

Well, it was hard for me (especially the waving of the hands) but I took a bad pen and made these notes.

My notes have no reference to Catholic Writing engaged in what I may call American Catholic Scholarship. It has been my observation that this Scholarship has commanded our greatest concern, and yet the truth is it is in need of no concern. It is a natural growth of the long old-world tradition of high Catholic scholarship and is an achievement which spreads magnificently with time. I view it from a distance with dumb and humble admiration. My notes refer, rather, to that American Catholic writing which presumes to be vital, readable, and contemporary, and which aims to reach the immediate American Catholic public and the greater non-Catholic public beyond. In some cases it pretends to journalism; in some cases to literature; in both cases it pretends to make its readers see life and feel it as its writers see life and feel it.

First of all, I would like to say there is no paucity of American Catholic writers appearing in contemporary print. The amount of lead, ink, typewriter ribbon, paper, and print, mutilated by them in the course of a year would fill—and should—a pit slightly larger, I imagine,

than the Grand Canyon. The beautifully pitiful complaint that there are too few of them is immediately false to any honest man who has sat behind a Catholic editor's desk and tried to read the exchanges.

There are plenty of these writers, but few of them, I agree, are readable. Together, they constitute a voice that is about as effectual as the crackling of a frosted telephone wire in the depth of night.

Why? Because they are dull. I can't read them, and few others can, for the simple reason that I and the others do not care to be bored. I know the plea for Loyalty. I know the plea for Sincerity. But I also know the literary crimes that have been committed and extolled in these names. (O sweet Sincerity! O simple Loyalty!)

There are some who read the American Catholic Writer, I know, and these kindly appreciative few—who read sometimes, I suspect, because misery likes company—these few are exactly the people who have no need for the present American Catholic Writer. The great body of Catholic readers is unreached. And the great body outside of that is untouched. And primarily because the American Catholic Writer is dull.

Why is he dull?

Primarily, because most people are dull.

Those that remain are dull mainly for two reasons: first, general captiousness and cantankerousness; secondly, a complete lack of a desire to entertain.

A good-tempered argument sometimes—not often—achieves results. A bad-tempered argument, never. But so great is the American Catholic love of argument, and belief in the efficacy of argument—the more vicious the better—that the American Catholic Writer flings off his coat at the first cry and lays about him. The ghosts are triumphantly laid, and the straw men destroyed, with a vigor, and often a viciousness, that gives the writer huge satisfaction—and few else except, perhaps, the members of his immediate family.

Why this cantankerousness?

Ordinarily, it springs from that extraordinary sense of inferiority which prompts bragging that someone like Babe Ruth is a Catholic and, at practically the same moment, resenting any criticism as unjust and malevolent. It comes from a weakness that knows no calm, no subtlety, no ingenuity, a weakness that defends itself with an obvious everlasting chip on the shoulder.

Less ordinarily, it comes from ignorance, or, I might say, guilelessness. It has never occurred to the writer that there is craft—even craftiness—in effective writing. Writing, to such a writer, is a physical exercise resembling cheering or, rather, booing, at a football game.

The second main fault—lack of a desire to entertain—is due in some measure to a lack of a talent for entertainment, and, in greater measure, to complete unawareness of the obligation on a writer to be entertaining.

The American Catholic Writer sets out bravely to be persuasive, to be provocative, to be useful—to be everything, indeed, except entertaining. This is not altogether his fault. He has all his life been clouded with the traditional—and occasionally wise—suspicion of anything in-

teresting. He has similarly been deeply impressed with the noble belief that truth, however stupidly stated, eventually triumphs. He takes to platitudes like pigeons to peanuts. He hesitates to try to be interesting. He shies from being amusing. He shuns satire. He suspects passion. He shuts his eyes at ecstasy. He is afraid of tenderness. And he flees from laughter.

I have not the space here to suggest the necessity of a thoughtful, considered, even artistic, approach to popular Catholic writing. I may, however, suggest that a writer achieves power only by rigid individual discipline and preparation, that he must discover and hew to a standard of taste, that he must beware of movements and committees, that, ultimately, in his own temperament lies the key to his method and distinction, that, in a word, in the silence of his own soul he must work out his style, which is his salvation.

But I would like to say a word on laughter.

This other night, as I sat with my two good friends, I made an observation. They are, in person, witty, somewhat imaginative, and generally entertaining. But when they take their militant pens in hand they are apt, quite often, to be solemn and even dull. It seems sometimes that they just can't be themselves on paper. Perhaps, they have not yet found the proper medium for what they have to say.

I can suggest a medium. It is a popular weekly Catholic magazine devoted largely to humor and satire and burlesque, with a genuinely epigrammatic paragraph for filler here and there. It is a bright, entertaining magazine, in good taste. It makes pertinent use of cartoon and caricature and, possibly, satiric comic strips. It abounds in jingles and crazy rhymes, and boasts, now and then, of a thumping ballad. It has its serious moments but they come almost as lapses—one or two short arresting poems as contemporary as the New York subway, a story with a sudden, terse heartbreak to it like a good newspaper feature, and a vivid, informative, three-hundred-word editorial.

The magazine is peculiarly entertaining. And how it makes its points! Lucidly and gaily, with flash and sparkle, calling out the guffaw that breaks to a choke in the throat, needling a hurt that ends in a grin.

I know thousands to whom the very idea of this publication is distasteful. But I know hundreds of thousands, including myself, to whom it is diverting, provocative, and useful. In any event, it is the magazine for these two gentlemen. And it is, begging everybody's pardon, the sort of magazine I see as necessary for the vitalization of American Catholic Writing. The weepers are always with us, always in our way. The laughing men haven't had much encouragement.

I am reminded of a story. This is an old one. But I must bore you with it again because it has a point.

Two old actors, Grimm and Somber, met shortly after Somber's wife's death. Somber was bowed in sorrow. Said Grimm: "You look bad, Somber, very bad. And I don't wonder. I never did see anyone weep over a body the way you did." Somber looked up quickly from his

sorrow. "Where did you see me, my friend?" he asked. "I saw you at the church," Grimm replied. "And never did I see anyone weep as you did." Somber shook his head in disappointment. "Ah, that was nothing, my friend, nothing," he said. "You should have caught me at the grave."

The story applies to my two friends. It seems they, for all their excellence, resemble their writing brothers. They wish to be caught at the grave.

It is really airplanes we need, gentlemen, airplanes. (If I may return to an early metaphor.) And there are no better wings than laughter and good humor. Humor is a flight, anyway. Lugubriousness is a crash. When you cry, your head falls to your hands. When you laugh, your head—like a singer's, reaching for a high note—goes up. Mr. Chesterton once said that Satan fell from force of

gravity. It is a lamentable comparison, but, just for the sake of being entertaining, I might say the Catholic Writer generally falls for the same reason.

The laughter that is in our hearts is a secret. What we reveal to the world is usually our captiousness and that small, misleading part of us, our solemnity. It isn't necessary. It isn't required by faith.

Some of us, perhaps because of a natural lack of vitality, perhaps because of the sickness that is known as self-pity, perhaps because our pen is inept and heavy-laden, perhaps because, merely, we have a weakness for bad theater, some of us for whatever reason like to be caught at the grave. But we might try to be entertaining even there. We have good examples for it in St. Francis of Assisi and St. Thomas More—and in many others that any Catholic Writer can, I'm sure, list for you.

The Novel Is Worth While

FRANCIS CONNOLLY

IT was the amiable Michael Mont in John Galsworthy's "The White Monkey" who told his wife Fleur that the really important writers always paddled their own canoes in what seemed backwaters but that the backwaters made up the main stream. Great writers are rarely members of the latest movement, never followers of the longest procession. Neither are the important readers.

In the commercial book market one can get any novel one wants—cheap sex thrillers, detective stories good and bad, fiction mixed with the class struggle, regional history and geography, refined British books about retired majors of the India service, or the latest Hitler outrage worked around a love-starved hero. The reader as well as the writer has his choice. Unfortunately the off-stage shouting has confused a great many sincere followers of the book supplements with the result that even so liberal a critic as Joseph Wood Krutch joins the ranks of the conservatives in asking whether the novel is worth while.

The trick of modern journalism is to give most space to the eccentric, or, lacking that, the merely new. All the recent talk has concerned the egotistic giantism of Thomas Wolfe, the sadism of Faulkner and Caldwell, the cleverness of Tess Slesinger and John O'Hara. Public interest has been attracted to the celebrities who are written about more than they are read. Relatively very few people purchased John Farrell's "Studs Lonigan" trilogy, and despite an unprecedented fanfare, "Of Time and the River" is by no means as popular as a dozen other contemporary novels.

With exceptions, other books which send shivers up the pious back are in the main the favorites only of literary cliques. What is talked about is not necessarily the most important. A stunt is not an event, much less a philosophy. There is no need to assume that every new book is perforce indebted to James Joyce.

As a matter of fact the novel is decidedly healthier than most of the other forms of literature. Even though the arts in general have suffered in consequence of the radical philosophical changes of the last century, and though literature in particular has been infected with the spirit of pessimism one must abandon all historical perspective to join the ranks of the viewers with alarm. Every age has had its muckrakers, its smart literary set, its courts of love, its cycle curving from extreme reticence to extreme frankness, from a cramping sense of form to utter formlessness.

The important work nevertheless, always hovering about the unattainable normal, has continued to flow on like Sir John Denham's Thames. Fads and popular immoralities perish, to be reborn, it is true, but never to live continuously, never to grow or to add to the sum total of human wisdom. The man of sentiment was an eighteenth-century folly, forgotten as soon as the nineteenth century had erected a new image to the man of property. So in our own day a disproportionate amount of indignation is wasted upon the esoteric. It is inconceivable that "Ulysses" should ever be more than an intellectual solecism, or Aldous Huxley more than a Bloomsbury nabob, but the defensist psychology of the right-minded rather than the cheers of the populace has filled books and magazines with commentary and argument while genuine masterpieces such as the Bounty trilogy of Nordhoff and Hall and the novels of Kenneth Roberts pass with only general approval.

The strength of the novel not only as a well-written form but as the expression of a fundamentally accurate criticism of life is perfectly clear when one recollects the important books of the past year. It is hard to tell whether one is more amazed by the number of excellent stories or by the number of those which should never have been printed. It is only fair, however, to judge a form by its best and highest type. Certainly many

authors and publishers pretend to offer little more than a few hours' relief from boredom or a romantic escape from suburbia. Publication does not signify an ambition to enter the hall of fame. Why judge Bess Streeter Aldrich and Lloyd Douglas by the standards of Dickens when neither author belongs in that category? One might as logically condemn a good film because it lacked the personality of the theater.

A year is a very short time in the history of art and yet the last year and a half has witnessed much that is relatively enduring. Forget for a moment the tea-table conversation about proletarian fiction, the new literature of the South, or the censorship of the Fascists, separate the daily news from esthetic judgment, fashion from fact, and the state of the novel will seem much less parlous. "Good-bye, Mr. Chips" and "Lost Horizons" were not only competent stories, perfect in what is called the old-fashioned style; they were also an answer of a poetic mind to the shallow cynicism of the present age. Old Chips is a truly classic character, noble, gentle, high-principled, a hero on the human plane. He is already a friend of thousands. Who, one might ask, is a friend of Eugene Gant? Again in "Lost Horizons" James Hilton's escape to the monastery in Tibet represents not only a successful *tour-de-force* but also an allegorical arraignment of a hurried, passion-ridden mechanical world. Captain Bligh in "Men Against the Sea" became under the stress of conflict a figure as heroic as the legendary Roland, the reincarnation of the chieftains in the ancient sagas.

The modern aversion to grandeur and sublimity cannot be reconciled with this constant pleasure in these and other books like Kenneth Roberts' Arundel series. "The Forty Days of Musa Dagh" with its concentration on the loftiest motives is another example of prose fiction analogous in construction, emotion, and fundamental design to epic poetry. Physical courage has always been attractive even to decadents, but Werfel's story of the Armenian massacre places less emphasis upon resistance to force than it does upon the integrity of the whole human character.

Nostalgia for the good life is especially keen throughout America. The popular conscience, narrowed by the now abandoned Puritan theology, is ever searching for the escape from irresponsibility, for things to admire. Silly attitudes are frequently the result of this urgency, like the martyr pose of the Marxist intellectuals or the I-love-life formula found in the new Harper Prize Novel "Honey in the Horn." But these little futilities do not obliterate the main truth—that the great, the good, and the beautiful, obscured sometimes by our hereditary moral astigmatism but never totally lost sight of, flourish among the weeds of materialism, sex, and sadistic ugliness.

In the early part of the year the three novels which deserved more attention than they received were Stark Young's "So Red the Rose," James Boyd's "Roll River," and Rachel Field's "Time out of Mind." Technically all three had faults, although they were much superior to the general list, and in "Time out of Mind"

an adultery is irritatingly sentimentalized; nevertheless these three American novels attempted to root out the reasons why life was so splendid a thing for our ancestors, why the Southern aristocrat, the Pennsylvania coal operator, and the Maine farm girl could achieve a peace and dignity which was never inherited by our own generation. The emotional tone in each case was serious, the analysis of human character realistic and sympathetic. "Roll River," in addition to being an uncanny revelation of the depths of domestic life, was almost edifying! American writers are retracing our national life in the various regions not merely to find local color but to discover the sources of our former idealism and courage.

Ellen Glasgow's arid pessimism in "Vein of Iron" and Robert Briffault's study of class degeneration in "Europa," both symptomatic of disillusion with the old scientific creeds, are less valid as social documents, certainly as art, than Willa Cather's "Lucy Gayheart" and James Hanley's "The Furys." The later two books, widely different in matter and manner, have this meaning in common—that even when humanity is crushed by the inhumanity of machine-age morals and philistinism we must remember that it is not the personal triumph but the effort to achieve a more perfect humanity which is the important thing. Both Lucy Gayheart and Mrs. Fury failed, just as the social philosophy of Christianity has for the moment failed even in the Western world, but only the most obstinate romanticist would demand another ending. Failure to do is not failure to be. Unfortunately many readers associate truth with practical success and refuse to believe that a writer can be a good Christian unless his hero is converted by the parish priest.

This tendency to shear only the black sheep has resulted in the criminal neglect of many other recent novels. Essayists are still footnoting the grammatical and moral lapses of Dreiser and Joyce, still puzzling over the mythical nonsense of Cabell and the methods of Virginia Woolf and Dorothy Richardson, while big things drift beyond their reach. Psychological techniques undoubtedly offer better cadavers for dissection than the imponderable qualities of philosophy. Hence the sketchy allusions to Hugh Walpole's "The Inquisitor" in which the symbolic struggle between the ancient monks and knights who founded Polchester cathedral and the rootless moderns who still instinctively cling to its walls is dismissed as melodrama. Any sound criticism is necessarily interpretative, calculated to bring out the inner meanings and intentions which the creative writers may only suggest and of which they are not necessarily fully conscious. The failure to make the most of a good thing is also apparent in the slight notice given to A. J. Cronin's analysis in "The Stars Look Down" of human nature stretched on the rack of England's black country. The same struggle between the inner and the outer forces of life which made "Three Loves" such a devastating study of selfishness, a dynamic concept of character acting as well as being acted upon, the principle of individual rather than collective or cosmic responsibility—all vital issues in any fundamental consideration of the novel—were

lost in the debate on social values and Dr. Cronin's medical frankness.

Optimism is not merely the wish for a better future, it is rather the faith in a better past and a belief in the potential nobility of the human spirit. The optimist, therefore, is not always happy; he is frequently indignant, like Sinclair Lewis in "It Can't Happen Here," and rather sad like Mary Ellen Chase in her stories of Maine life. This indignation and retrospective sadness has been but should not be confused with the sense of sorrow, which is really the sense of sin, in so many of the personal records miscalled novels. The ache for beauty is not the pain of despair, nor is the consciousness of tragedy always coincident with contempt for man. The noble passion of the poets still flows on, not at the present time a roaring torrent, nor yet a muddy creek.

As long as a short season of six months can supply us with stories in the shining style of "Lucy Gayheart" and Francis Brett Young's "White Ladies," with exciting narratives like Masefield's "Victorious Troy," with solid portraits like Helen White's "Not Built with Hands," with moral analyses like Walsh's "Out of the Whirlwind," we need not fear that the novel is at the point of death. Change is just as necessary a law of literature and life as permanence. The old wine has been poured into strange new bottles but it remains very much the same in quantity and quality. We expect too much. Since an unprecedented number of people have learned how to spell we concluded that the proportion of genius had also increased. But the public schools, however valuable in cutting down illiteracy, cannot produce Shakespeares.

Literature

Catholic Authors of Today

FRANCIS TALBOT, S.J.

WITHOUT preamble, we present herewith the names of the authors who have been nominated for the plebiscite. We have endeavored to make the lists inclusive, and have sought all sources for information. Should there be omissions of a glaring nature, or just omissions, we should be glad to publish a further list. Our aim is to compile, with the help of our readers, a complete file of all Catholics, living today, who have written books in English, or whose books have been translated into English.

The names of the authors are arranged in two divisions: A. Authors who were born in the United States or who, through long residence, are recognized as Americans; B. Authors foreign to the United States whose medium of expression is English, as well as those whose work has been turned into English.

Under the first classification, that of American authors, are placed the names of:

Alexander, Calvert, S.J.	Bittle, Celestine N., O.M.Cap.
Barry, Philip	Blakely, Paul L., S.J.
Benson, Joachim, M.S.S.S.T.	Blunt, Rev. Hugh
Betten, Francis, S.J.	Bolton, Mother M., R.C.

Borden, Lucille	Garesché, Edward F., S.J.
Borgmann, Henry, C.S.S.R.	Garraghan, Gilbert, S.J.
Boyton, Neil, S.J.	Gillard, John T., S.S.J.
Brégy, Katherine	Gillis, James M., C.S.P.
Britt, Matthew, O.S.B.	Giltinan, Caroline
Bresnan, Catherine	Gilmore, Florence
Brosnan, William J., S.J.	Goldstein, David
Bruehl, Rev. Charles	Graham, Rev. James M.
Brunini, John Gilland	Griffin, Rev. Joseph A.
Buckley, Nancy	Guilday, Msgr. Peter
Burke, John J., C.S.P.	Gurn, Joseph
Burke, Thomas, C.S.P.	Haas, Rev. Francis J.
Burke, Thomas E., C.S.C.	Hawks, Rev. Edward
Bunker, John	Hayes, Carlton J. H.
Bull, George D., S.J.	Hennrich, Kilian, O.M.Cap.
Callan, Charles J., O.P.	Herbst, Winfred, S.D.S.
Campbell, Joseph	Herzog, Charles, S.J.
Carlin, Francis	Heyliger, William
Carroll, P. J., C.S.C.	Hickey, Daniel Whithead
Carver, George	Hilliard, Marion Pharo
Chanler, Mrs. Winthrop	Hoffman, Ross J. S.
Chapman, Rev. Michael A.	Holland, Robert, S.J.
Chetwood, Thomas, S.J.	Homan, Helen Walker
Clarke, Mother, R.C.	Horgan, Paul
Clemens, Cyril	Hornback, Florence
Code, Rev. Joseph B.	Houck, Rev. Frederick
Confrey, Burton	Hubbard, Bernard, S.J.
Connolly, James B.	Hurley, Wilfred G., C.S.P.
Connolly, Myles	Husslein, Joseph, S.J.
Connolly, Terence J., S.J.	Jordan, Elizabeth
Conway, B. L., C.S.P.	Jurgens, Sylvester P., S.M.
Cotter, Rev. James H.	Kane, William T., S.J.
Cullen, Rev. Thomas F.	Kelley, Most Rev. Francis C.
Curran, Rev. E. L.	Kelly, Herbert, S.S.M.
Cox, Ignatius W., S.J.	Kelly, Blanche Mary
Crabitts, Pierre	Kelly, Rev. John B.
Daly, James J., S.J.	Kenkel, Frederick P.
Daly, Thomas A.	Kenny, Michael, S.J.
D'Assisi, Mother, O.S.U.	Keon, Grace
Deferrari, Roy	Kilmer, Aline
Dehey, Eleanore	Kirsch, Felix, O.M.Cap.
Delamare, Henriette	Kite, Elizabeth
Dolan, Albert H., O. Carm.	Kleist, J. A., S.J.
Donnelly, Francis P., S.J.	Klinker, Anthony
Donovan, George F.	LaFarge, John, S.J.
Donovan, Josephine	Lahey, Thomas A., C.S.C.
Dooley, Rev. Peter	Lamm, William R., S.M.
Drady, Alan	Latz, Leo J.
Duggan, Msgr. Thomas S.	Lavery, Emmet
Dunne, Peter F.	LeBuffe, Francis P., S.J.
Earls, Michael, S.J.	Lelen, Rev. J. M.
Easby-Smith, Anne	Lenhart, John M., O.M.Cap.
Elbert, John, S.M.	Leo, Brother, F.S.C.
Eleanore, Sister M., C.S.C.	Levy, Rosalie Marie
Eliot, Ethel Cook	Loneragan, William I., S.J.
Ellard, Gerald, S.J.	Lord, Daniel A., S.J.
Elliott, Maud Howe	Lord, Rev. Robert
Emmanuel, Sister	Low, Ruth Irma
Feeney, Leonard, S.J.	Lynk, Frederick M., S.V.D.
Feeney, Thomas J., S.J.	Manning, Marie
Fink, Rev. Leo G.	MacDonough, Sister Rosa
Fitzpatrick, Benedict	Madden, Marie R.
Fitzpatrick, Edward A.	Madeleva, Sister M., C.S.C.
Flick, Ella	Maguire, Theophane, C.P.
Foik, Paul J., C.S.C.	Mahony, Michael, S.J.
Foley, Leo, C.M.	Mannix, Mary E.
Friedel, Francis J., S.M.	Marique, Pierre J.
Furfey, Rev. Paul H.	Maynard, Theodore

Meehan, Thomas F.
 Mercier, Louis J. A.
 Mills, Rev. Philo L.
 Moffat, John, S.J.
 Monica, Sister, O.S.U.
 Morrison, Bakewell, S.J.
 McAstocker, David P., S.J.
 McCabe, Lida Rose
 McCarthy, Dennis
 McCarthy, Raphael C., S.J.
 McCormick, Virginia
 McDonald, Irving
 McGill, Mary
 McGoldrick, Rita C.
 McGovern, Milton
 McGucken, William, S. J.
 McHugh, John A., O.P.
 McMahon, Msgr. Joseph H.
 McNulty, Rev. John L.
 McSorley, Joseph, C.S.P.
 Mary, Sister, I.H.M.
 Middleton, Rev. John S.
 Millar, Moorhouse F. X., S.J.
 Miller, J. Corson
 Minogue, C. Anna
 Moody, John
 Moon, Parker T.
 Moore, Thomas V., O.S.B.
 Moseley, Daisy Haywood
 Mullaly, Charles J., S.J.
 Muntz, Albert, S.J.
 Murphy, Edward F., S.S.J.
 Musser, Benjamin
 Myers, Elaine
 Neill, Esther
 Norris, Kathleen
 O'Brien, Isadore, O.F.M.
 O'Brien, Rev. John A.
 O'Brien, Rev. Joseph L.
 O'Connell, Daniel M., S.J.
 O'Connell, William Cardinal
 O'Connell, Raphael V., S.J.
 O'Daniel, Victor F., O.P.
 O'Neil, Jerold
 O'Shaughnessy, Edith
 O'Shaughnessy, Michael
 O'Sheel, Seumas
 Pace, Msgr. Edward
 Page, Father
 Placid, Father, O.S.B.
 Parmenter, Catherine
 Parsons, Wilfrid, S.J.
 Patterson, Frances Taylor
 Patterson, Laurence K., S.J.
 Phelan, Rev. Thomas P.
 Pulsford, Daniel B.
 Purcell, Rev. Harold, C.P.

Quirk, Charles, S.J.
 Rauscher, John, S.M.
 Reilly, Joseph J.
 Repplier, Agnes
 Ross, Rev. J. Elliot
 Ryan, Rev. Edwin
 Ryan, Leo Raymond
 Ryan, Mother, R.S.C.J.
 Ryan, Most Rev. James H.
 Ryan, Msgr. John A.
 Sands, William Franklin
 Sargent, Daniel
 Schmiedeler, Edgar B., O.S.B.
 Scott, Martin, S.J.
 Selwin-Tait, Monica
 Sharkey, Sister Mary Agnes
 Sheen, Msgr. Fulton
 Shepperson, Sister M. Fides
 Sherwood, Grace H.
 Schrott, Lambert, O.S.B.
 Shuster, George N.
 Skelly, A. M., O.P.
 Skinner, Richard Dana
 Smith, Helen Grace
 Smith, Alfred E.
 Spearman, Frank
 Stebbing, George, C.S.S.R.
 Steck, Francis B., O.F.M.
 Stock, Leo Francis
 Strahan, Rev. Speer
 Sullivan, Frank
 Synon, Mary
 Talbot, Francis, S.J.
 Taylor, Samuel
 Thayer, Mary Dixon
 Thompson, Frederic
 Thorning, Joseph F., S.J.
 Tobin, Agnes
 Tracy, Vera Marie
 Tucker, John William
 Waggaman, Mary T.
 Walsh, Edmund A., S.J.
 Walsh, James J.
 Walsh, William Thomas
 Ward, Justine Bayard
 Ward, Leo, C.S.C.
 Whalen, Rev. Will W.
 White, Helen C.
 Williams, Joseph J., S.J.
 Williams, Michael
 Wirries, Mabel Grace
 Wolfe, Msgr. John M.
 Wynne, John J., S.J.
 Young, Rev. Francis C.
 Zema, Demetrius, S.J.

were published in our issue of October 19. Certain important "don'ts" drawn up by Brother Leo, carried in the issue of November 30, should be re-read. Since the final counting of votes will begin to be computed at the end of this month, all our readers are urged to send us their ballots, and immediately. Next week the foreign names will be presented.

The Year's Significant Books

GERARD B. DONNELLY, S.J.

THE following list does not at all pretend to be a selection of the best books turned out during the past twelve months, nor does it claim to be a complete record even of the year's more instructive and readable books. It is offered rather as a check list, as a convenient catalogue that does indeed include one or two monumentally studious works, such as Eyre's "European Civilization," but was compiled with an eye rather to thoughtful and entertaining volumes about leading men and events of the past as well as about important people and problems of the present.

Several of the volumes, for example, a biography sure to be hailed as a classic and valuable work by both Catholic and non-Catholic scholars alike—Brodrick's "Life of St. Peter Canisius," are not yet released by their publishers, but are due before December 31. All the others, however, have been given to the world since last New Year's Day.

The list, as might be expected in this Review, contains a large proportion of books by Catholic writers. Yet as a whole the list is not offered to the general public but specifically to our own subscribers. Weekly readers of AMERICA are adult-minded persons, acquainted with the Catholic position on current problems and sufficiently educated to be able to detect the biased history, the sentimental thinking, and the twisted conclusions that appear so frequently in the publishers' output.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY; HAGIOGRAPHY

EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION, VOLS. I, II, and III. Edited by Edward Eyre. *Oxford University Press*. \$8.75, \$5.25, and \$6.25 respectively.

THE STORY OF CIVILIZATION: OUR ORIENTAL HERITAGE. Will Durant. *Simon and Schuster*. \$5.00.

THE PRE-NICENE CHURCH. Burns, Oates, and Washbourne. 7/6.

A HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. VOL. II. Fernand Mourret, S.S. *Herder*. \$4.00.

A HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. VOL. II. Dom Charles Poulet. *Herder*. \$5.00.

A HISTORY OF THE CHURCH. VOL. II. Philip Hughes. *Sheed and Ward*. \$4.00.

WOMEN AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH YESTERDAY AND TODAY. Olga Hartley. *Burns, Oates, and Washbourne*. 5/.

ISABELLA THE CRUSADER. William Thomas Walsh. *Sheed and Ward*. \$2.50.

BACK TO LANGLAND. Stanley B. James. *Sands*. 3/6.

THE STORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH UNDER HENRY VIII. Edited by C. A. Newdigate, S.J., and E. A. Dignam, S.J. *Burns, Oates, and Washbourne*. 1/6.

THOMAS MORE. Christopher Hollis. *Bruce*. \$2.25.

THOMAS MORE. R. W. Chambers. *Harcourt, Brace*. \$3.75.

Those listed above are the nominees, to date, who may be voted upon. Our readers are asked to cast their ballots, so that the forty "contemporary immortals" may be lifted into eminence. Each voter may name up to twenty-five foreign authors, and up to fifteen Americans. It is not required of each voter, however, to specify the full number of names. Rather, it is urged that each voter name only those authors whose work he considers to be of superior quality. The rules governing the plebiscite

- CHARLES I AND THE COURT OF ROME. Gordon Albion. *Burns, Oates, and Washbourne*. 15/.
- THE ENGLAND OF CHARLES II. Arthur Bryant. *Longmans, Green*. \$2.00.
- PRINCE CHARLIE AND HIS LADIES. Compton Mackenzie. *Knopf*. \$3.00.
- MILTON. Hilaire Belloc. *Lippincott*. \$4.00.
- SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT. Alfred Harbage. *University of Pennsylvania Press*. \$3.00.
- MARLBOROUGH: HIS LIFE AND TIMES. VOLS. 3 AND 4. Winston S. Churchill. *Scribner's*. \$6.00.
- LORD BROUGHAM. G. T. Garratt. *Macmillan*. \$5.50.
- STRANGE DESTINY: A BIOGRAPHY OF WARREN HASTINGS. A. Mervyn Davies. *Putnam's*. \$5.00.
- QUEEN VICTORIA. E. F. Benson. *Longmans, Green*. \$3.50.
- DICKENS. André Maurois. *Harper*. \$2.00.
- JOSEPH CONRAD AND HIS CIRCLE. Jessie Conrad. *Dutton*. \$3.75.
- GERALD. Daphne du Maurier. *Doubleday, Doran*. \$3.00.
- GILBERT AND SULLIVAN. Hesketh Pearson. *Harper*. \$3.00.
- PORTRAIT OF MY FAMILY. Derek Patmore. *Harper*. \$3.75.
- THEATRE OF LIFE, 1863-1905. Esme Howard. *Little, Brown*. \$3.50.
- THE ANGEL OF THE ASSASSINATION (CHARLOTTE CORDAY). Joseph Shearing. *Smith and Haas*. \$2.75.
- DANTON. Hermann Wendel. *Yale University Press*. \$3.75.
- WITH NAPOLEON IN RUSSIA. General de Caulaincourt. *Morrow*. \$3.75.
- VILLENEUVE-BARGEMONT: PRECURSOR OF MODERN SOCIAL CATHOLICISM. Sister Mary Ignatius Ring, S.N.D. *Bruce*. \$3.50.
- LEO XIII, ITALY AND FRANCE. Eduardo Soderini. *Burns, Oates, and Washbourne*. 15/.
- ALBERT OF BELGIUM. Emile Cammaerts. *Macmillan*. \$5.00.
- SAWDUST CAESAR (MUSSOLINI). George Seldes. *Harper*. \$3.00.
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A Review of Current Books

Napoleon's Apologia

WITH NAPOLEON IN RUSSIA. *The Memoirs of General de Caulaincourt.* Edited by George Libaire. William Morrow and Company. \$3.75. Published November 29.

AT the time of the Russian campaign (1812), the very turning point of Napoleon's career, Armand de Caulaincourt, who was Master of Horse, confidant, and constant companion of Napoleon, jotted down a day-by-day report of what he and the Emperor had said and done as soon as the great man's study door had slammed to or beside the bivouac fires outside the imperial tent. When Napoleon, incognito, fled by sledge across a hostile Europe to Paris, Caulaincourt was his only companion and for thirteen days and nights the Grand Ecuyer had a long tête-à-tête with his sovereign. He listened while Napoleon thought aloud about his past life, Marie Louise, their son, England, the Continental system and the American War of 1812, his contemporaries and staff, Pius VII and the Concordat, past projects, the Russian failure, and his future plans. Napoleon's own replies were accurately and laboriously taken down while the Emperor napped and the sleepless Master of Horse kept watch during the long and epic flight home from Poland. It is from these copious notes taken on the spot that Caulaincourt wrote his memoirs in 1822.

This journal, so engaging and veracious, is the handiwork of a sympathetic yet not servile witness who strives always to see plainly, to think clearly, and to record exactly even when he doggedly disagrees. It is at once the colorful portrait of the useful and rugged adviser who shares the canvas with the Strong Man who dominated the whole scene. There is worked into the picture a battalion of amazing episodes: the parade of political events leading up to the Russian expedition (two heavy chapters, the only uninteresting ones in the book), the advance of the Grand Army deeper and deeper into the heart of a burning country, the taking of Smolensk and the costly victory of Borodino, the occupation of Moscow with its incendiary sequel, the horror of the retreat, the hunger and ice and cold during the exodus, the tragic crossing of the Beresina, culminating in the famous flight to Warsaw, to Dresden, and finally to Paris when Napoleon unburdened himself to General Caulaincourt in one unceasing *apologia* in the heyday of *La Gloire*.

Of the more than 40,000 works that have been written about Napoleon, this unique record is unquestionably the cardinal close-up of the Dictator. Recorded in the soberest language, the story is still sensational, and the man with all his gifts and faults and weaknesses appears in the flesh, solid and alive. He becomes a most compelling figure, more gigantic in some ways than the inexplicable portent of popular legend and far more interesting as a normal man uniformly steadfast of purpose and plan, and blessed with an uncommon share of common sense, subtle humor, tender feeling, and shrewd comprehension. To those reflective readers of Napoleoniana these commentaries offer food a-plenty; to the historian this candid conversation piece will become the touchstone of all other memoirs on the Russian Campaign. Few of the memorabilia of Napoleon can have the excitement of this book.

WILLIAM J. SCHLAERTH.

Top of the World

CRADLE OF THE STORMS. By Bernard R. Hubbard, S.J. Dodd, Mead and Company. \$3.00. Published November 6.

AS Father Hubbard starts another nation-wide lecture tour, this book on his Alaskan expedition comes from the presses. It is a book that is almost difficult to review. There are too many adventures, discoveries, explorations, human-interest stories that might be mentioned, all of them illustrated by a large number of

strikingly beautiful photographs that are a great part of the pleasure the book will bring.

Here are some of those adventures. Father Hubbard was flown into the crater of the erupting Aniakchak volcano by Frank Dorbandt. And because Dorbandt wanted to find out how fast geese could fly (eighty miles an hour), they found themselves with twenty minutes of gasoline left in the tank of the plane—and it required a half-hour spiral to get out of the crater. It would be a couple of weeks' walk to a new supply of gasoline. How they got out makes a thrilling chapter.

After being thwarted on two attempts, Father Hubbard, Ed Levin, and Rod Chisholm climbed Shishaldin. They struggled to the top of the great crater of Akutan, on Akutan Island, to find the "cradle of the tempests":

For storms, all you need is air masses at different temperatures with conditions present to start them moving. On one side of us was the Pacific Ocean with the warm air over the Japanese current; on the other side was the Bering Sea with its cold air from the Arctic current. The volcanic rift of the Alaska Peninsula plus the Aleutian Islands is an 1,800-mile arc of high mountains and narrow passes. Through these passes the heavy cold air of the Bering pours to meet the rising warm air of the Pacific, and around these high volcanic peaks the storm-cloud nuclei begin. To the storm centers thus started, the rotation of the earth gives a west-to-east movement, and they spread from the Aleutians across the Gulf of Alaska and across North America, driving the weaker north-to-south storms along with them into the Atlantic and giving us our normal winters and prevailing storms.

There were literally dozens of adventures and humorous incidents—the trip through the Ghost Forest, into the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, the dangerous struggle through the flood, the seven volcanic puppies and the difficulties of bringing them back alive. The happenings are related simply but forcefully—you really travel with Father Hubbard every foot of the way, and the superb photographs strengthen this effect. The members of the party are always in evidence—Ed Levin and the Chisholms, Beverly Jones and Nick Cavaliere, Peterson and Getty, and the ever-faithful dogs.

Cradle of the Storms is a worthy companion to *Mush, You Malemutes!* It is an absorbing and entertaining recounting of those useful, as well as dangerous explorations, one that will hold your attention until the last page has been turned, the last photograph studied.

FLOYD ANDERSON.

Wandering Troubadour

VACHEL LINDSAY. By Edgar Lee Masters. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.00.

IF it is true that only a poet should criticize poetry then the author of this book was happily chosen, for Mr. Masters has made his own considerable contribution to Mid-Western song. Certain it is that the author approaches his subject with verve, appreciation, and some authority of view.

Mr. Masters, in a moment of analysis, tells us that "America was peopled by all the non-conformist stocks of England, France, and Germany," and that it "started as an evangelical culture," in which Vachel Lindsay, in his own due time, was immersed. I shall not at the moment dissent from this statement. Seeing that American culture is what it is, I can agree with the greatest alacrity that it is, indeed, an evangelical one, and that Mr. Lindsay's poetry is quite typical of it. Had Lindsay's general outlook on life been less fanatical, his artistic output would probably have been less frenetic. I further agree with Mr. Masters when he says that Lindsay "is in no sense of the blood of Chaucer," for the fourteenth-century master, to consider only one facet of his personality, was in possession of the riches of an historical, traditional, broad Christianity, which in the case of the Illinois poet was narrowed down to a conglomeration of the Campbellite sect, the Y. M. C. A., and the Anti-Saloon League. Such a background will rarely experience the enhancement of poetic high-lights.

The author tells us that "one of Lindsay's tragedies was that he was never to know the truth about anything, at least unobscured by his vaporings and coruscations." Nowhere is this more pathetically evident than in the poet's views on religion. Lindsay burned with a great love of Christ, but it was for a Christ of his own creation and interpretation. As one reads the record of Lindsay's thought as revealed in Mr. Masters' book, one cannot help be moved by the ever-unsatisfied yearnings of this poetic soul for the higher spiritual life. In the moments of his greatest stress Lindsay's Protestant Christianity failed him; in moments of earnest questioning his mind vacillated between such far-flung points as Catholicism and Buddhism.

There is an undertone of defeat running through the whole of the poet's life. In his youth he suffered hunger in order that he might take art courses which were to be barren of achievement; as a kind of modern troubadour he peddled his early poems for a penny a piece among the *gauche* druggists and bakers of New York's Tenth Avenue; he tirelessly trudged through the South and the West endeavoring to spread his Gospel of Beauty; he visualized a Magical Springfield; from a thousand platforms he chanted his poems as an expression of the Higher Vaudeville. But the Tenth Avenue denizens were stolid, the South remained unconverted, Springfield is still the ugly haunt of vulgar politicians, and the *intelligentsia* viewed Lindsay's recitations as high-priced clowning. Mr. Masters tells us that the poet protested against the Mid-West's "usual crucifixion of the artist." And well he might. But then there is always the possibility that even the Mid-West might have rendered a greater glory to a greater artist.

Lindsay deserves, as his biographer says, a place in the history of literature. But he does so only as a passing phenomenon indicative of the current artistic tawdriness of our evangelical culture.

THOMAS J. LYMAN.

Philosophy Classic

POLARITY. By Erich Przywara, S.J. Oxford University Press. \$3.00. Published August 22.

FATHER PRZYWARA, one of the outstanding German exponents of the philosophy of Cardinal Newman, has written a book that is sure to cause much discussion and to stimulate Catholic philosophers and theologians to new efforts in the science of the philosophy of religion. He bases his entire book on the *analogia entis* as developed in the philosophy of St. Thomas. Such words as Molinism, Thomism, Scotism, the Alexandrian school, Benedictines, Trappists, Cardinal Newman, liturgy, philosophy, theology, immanence transcendence, flash across nearly every page of the book and should warn the unwary reader that here is no popular treatise but a book that the professional student of philosophy and theology will want to read and re-read several times. If we cannot agree with all we read, at least we will admit that the book shakes us out of our dogmatic slumber.

The book is dominated by the concept brought to perhaps final fruition by Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. Przywara finds in the entire history of the Church certain tensions and tendencies which look at first like opposites, but turn out to be complements of one another. He shows that Augustine lives on in Aquinas, and Newman gathers up the thought of both these great doctors in a newer synthesis. If all that Father Przywara says could be substantiated (I venture no opinion on that topic), this book would make in the direction of the final canonization of Newman's best theses. There is a certain fitness in the fact that two of the best modern interpretations of the thought of Newman are from the pen of Father D'Arcy, S.J., and Father Przywara, S.J. Jesuit writers treated Newman's *Grammar of Assent* rather shabbily when it appeared in 1870, as any one who cares to investigate can discover by going over the files of the *Month* for that year and the succeeding year.

There is one Protestant fable, however, that Father Przywara has taken uncritically into his work. It is enshrined in this

sentence: "If one remembers that it was an Englishman, Bacon, who paved the way for the specifically modern epoch of positive science, it appears no accident that once again it should be an Englishman, who by virtue of his calm sense of reality created the *Organon* of the newly orientated philosophy of religion, at least in its first essay." Historians of modern philosophy are pretty well agreed that Bacon paved the way for nobody but Bacon. He despised the real scientists of his own day. He was the press agent of modern science but contributed nothing of value. But such an historical blunder is rare in this work. *Polarity* can never be a popular book, but it should be an influential one.

ALFRED G. BRICKEL.

Shorter Reviews

EPITAPH ON GEORGE MOORE. By Charles Morgan. The Macmillan Company. \$1.25. Published November 22.

THIS well-written essay, in the fashion of most epitaphs, attempts to soften the verdict of his critics on George Moore, the man and the artist. "In some respects," says Mr. Morgan, "George Moore was still an adolescent even in his old age; in some, a figure of comedy that swung continually towards farce; but in his devotion to his art, and his readiness to sacrifice all else to it, he was saint or devil according to your prejudice." He then proceeds to canonize his friend by the simple device of separating Moore (at his own suggestion), into a dual personality: Moore himself, when he was decent and a competent artist, and Amico Moorini, when he was a boor and a bungler. Who would not fare well if furnished with such a convenient biographical scapegoat?

Another task that Mr. Morgan attempts is to make George Moore spiritual, because he was dedicated to abstract perfection in literature. How this would delight the esthetes of the Green Carnation school! Unfortunately for Mr. Morgan's thesis, the prejudice of the majority is against the sainthood of a man who boasts of being a renegade to his country and religion and who says: "I am feminine, morbid and perverse. . . I am ashamed of nothing I have done, especially my sins." J. G. M.

SILAS CROCKETT. By Mary Ellen Chase. The Macmillan Company. \$2.50. Published November 12.

THE attractive quietness of style which characterizes Mary Ellen Chase's writing is one of the most outstanding features of her most recent volume. It is the story of four generations of a Maine sea-faring family, and its 400 pages cover a stretch of 100 years. Unlike most saga novels, its characters are few, clearly defined, and always interesting. This interest comes from the fact that they are drawn with their feet, both of them, firmly rooted in the land that is Maine, the land of which they are a part, even when they live at sea. Their lives are as real as their ambitions can make them, and the courage of these lives endows them with the power of fiery action. Interwoven with the story of the Crocketts is a splendid though sketchy history of shipping, the invention of steam, wars that troubled our country, the social, political and religious changes which have altered it in so many of its aspects. The theme of an almost blind devotion to family pride and traditions is not a new one in our New England literature. Edwin Arlington Robinson has preserved the tale in the somewhat morose lines of *The House on the Hill*, as have many another writer both of poetry and prose. In the pages of Miss Chase's book there is a dignity, a sad dignity if you will, one that should arouse sympathy even from those who are wont to scoff at the heritage of great family names. There are principles and ideals threaded into the stuff of this story, and that is a find extraordinary enough to recommend any book today.

Silas Crockett is all and no more than it purports to be—a very good story of the interesting lives of interesting people. It is wholesome with the wholesomeness of newly baked bread, and intellectually it is quite as nourishing. J. R. N. M.

THE SPANISH MAIN. By Philip Ainsworth Means. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.00. Published November 1.

REFRESHING! When one finds careful scholarship, balanced judgment, penetrating analysis of a complex problem, and charm of style joined together in a work of history, then "refreshing" is the correct word. Mr. Means, no stranger to students of Hispanic American history, in the present volume has given an excellent study of international rivalries (1492-1700) in what he very aptly calls "The Focus of Envy." The day of Anglo-Saxon unfairness to things Hispanic is happily waning in American historical writing. Beginning with a short and very sympathetic review of Spain's establishment in the central zone of the New World, the author passes to the consideration of the many attacks on her supremacy there made by England, France, the Netherlands. Each of Spain's enemies had her particular end and her characteristic method in the challenge. Yet, in the two centuries of titanic struggle, by fair means and foul, Spain's enemies can hardly be termed overly successful. With one or two minor exceptions they only succeeded in making her accept the principle of effective occupation, which, all things considered, is little enough by way of results.

Congratulations to Mr. Means for his insistence on the importance of Fray Francisco de Vitoria in regard to Spanish colonial theory, for his illuminating pages on the vagabondage of El Dorado, his trenchant appraisal of the Puritan phase and English rivalry in general, and very especially for the splendid pages of synthesis in the last chapter.

J. F. B.

HEAVEN: AN ANTHOLOGY. Compiled by a Religious of the Sacred Heart. Longmans, Green and Company. \$2.00.

THIS is not a book to be handled by any literary critic after the manner of his kind; it is one to be read with joy, with amazement, with humble pride (for we may thus humbly exult with pride at the magnificence of our Catholic heritage), and then to be read and re-read again, until its pages fall apart into shreds from much using.

The compiler chose with an inerrant wisdom; gathered from all the glory of the Catholic past and present the most sonorous prose, the most stately Englishing of an elder verse that speaks of the blessedness of Heaven. Cyprian, Augustine of Hippo, Bede, Bernard of Morlaix, Abelard, Aquinas, Faber, Rickaby, Wasmann are but a few of the ancients and moderns who in poetry or in prose fill the pages of what is surely one of the most glorious and most entrancingly beautiful books published in our day. Religious will desire it eagerly (and with reason) for their spiritual reading; layfolk will be thrilled with the magnificences of its noble passages. This anthology, which is the Spiritual Book Associates' choice for November, has but one fault: it is much too short, for the treasury whence it was gathered is inexhaustible.

W. H. W.

A SHORT HISTORY OF FRENCH LITERATURE. Translated from Daniel Mornet's *Histoire de la littérature et de la pensée françaises*. By C. A. Choquette and Christian Gauss. F. S. Crofts and Company. \$2.25.

IN the hands of a competent professor, the present translation should prove a valuable textbook. The author presents not only a comprehensive critical survey of French literature but endeavors to incorporate it with the history of French thought, a method to be urged upon critics and historians alike. The book can also be recommended to private students and casual readers, but with a few reservations. The French critic is apt to over-emphasize trends and categories; Professor Mornet has erred grievously on the opposite side. Malherbe's influence on classicism, for instance, is hardly mentioned, and the role of the Académie is completely obscured. Again, his treatment of the Symbolists, most significant of modern schools, is very unsatisfactory, the order in which they are presented being misleading. Individual figures also suffer:

Boileau and Sainte-Beuve, to name but two. The paragraphs on Boileau are contradictory; it is first asserted that he was proved right, and then carefully explained why he was utterly wrong. In his treatment of Sainte-Beuve, the author presents only half the truth, and omits to say that the great critic, despite extraordinary taste, lacked any fixed standards, and adhered, successively, to almost every theory prevalent in his day.

In giving a history of thought, Professor Mornet falls below the high level of his critical work, notably in treating the era of the Encyclopedists and in his praise of Descartes, who was, it seems, the first to discover the role of human reason. Scholasticism is characterized as a school of petty disputes and slavish dependence on authority; such misstatements indicate a shocking lack of elementary information. Apart from these obvious faults the translation will be welcomed.

M. L. S.

FRENCH NOVELISTS OF TODAY. By Milton H. Stansbury. University of Pennsylvania Press. \$2.00.

TOO many French critics, educated in the disputes of Academy and rebels, produce polemics to praise or condemn literary schools, and foreign critics (page Mr. Lewisohn), gifted with genuine critical ability, must needs follow the trend and proclaim the apotheosis of Freud and Mallarmé in turn. Mr. Stansbury presents us with a book of criticism and nothing else. That it will serve to arouse "curiosity or enthusiasm" in Catholic readers is at least doubtful, considering the subject-matter of most of the authors mentioned, but as a critical work and an informing one, it can be recommended without qualification.

André Gide, Colette, Jules Romains, Giraudoux, Cocteau are, even to the average well-read American, only names; Mr. Stansbury invests them with a vivid personality and a *raison d'être*. His commentary on each is criticism at its best: more suggestive than analytical, free from that type of epigrammatic comment which conveys nothing but the wit of the critic, and not (page Mr. Lewisohn once more) laid on with a trowel. His style is pleasingly informal, but his comments are to the point and commendably brief. His treatment of Dadaism and the Surrealists, limited to the personalities involved and their publicity value, is admirably common-sense. It may be added that Catholics who are uncritically enthusiastic about Mauriac's *Vipers' Tangle* will do well to review Mr. Stansbury's remarks on Mauriac's previous books.

M. L. S.

CELL 202—SING SING. By Warden Lewis E. Lawes. Farrar and Rinehart. \$3.00.

FOUR men who had been condemned by society as unfit for intercourse with their fellows and whose prison terms encompassed almost a century, occupied consecutively the same cell in Sing Sing. Nine years after the demolition of the cell block, four stones upon which had been chiseled names, dates, etc., were discovered; a fact which later revealed that those four men had occupied Cell 202 during the entire term of their confinement. That was twelve years ago and with the finding of those stones, Mr. Lawes conceived the idea of his latest volume wherein he manifests in a striking manner those two qualities recognized by all who have followed the Warden of Sing Sing in his work and in his writings: humaneness, understanding, and sympathy as a guardian of criminals; forcefulness and interest as a writer.

In unfolding the stories of the four consecutive occupants of this cell, Mr. Lawes allows his readers to study in intimate detail not only the prison lives of these men, with its influences and effects upon the characters of each, but portrays vividly and in gripping detail the circumstances of life, heredity, and environment that paved the way for the fall of each. Weaving a fabric wherein fact and truth predominate, Warden Lawes traces the changes and developments of American penology, along with the inhumaneness—more prevalent at times than the farther-reaching sympathetic treatment of our system of penology. Through these four char-

acters, he has drawn a concise, frank picture of the changing humors in the last century of American social life, and exposes in glaring reality how frequently the law "as a basis for permanence and security [has] missed its purpose," actually confirming "that which was already bad," and corrupting "that which was weak."

R. P. L.

FROM FARM BOY TO FINANCIER. By Frank A. Vanderlip and Boyden Sparkes. D. Appleton-Century Company. \$3.50.

HERE is a book that is essentially autobiographical. What share Boyden Sparkes had in its production is completely concealed. On the title page he is credited with collaboration, and were it not for this credit the reader would never suspect that any one but Mr. Vanderlip himself had any part in the book's make-up. In substance the story of progress from poverty to power is common enough, and many parallels—e.g., Herbert Hoover, "Babe" Ruth—suggest themselves easily. In detail, however, the particular mentality of Mr. Vanderlip responding to opportunity is highly instructive and interesting. His sagacity in judging character; his assurance in integrating events; his natural wisdom in selecting human agents best fitted to function most efficiently amid an intricate series of financial perplexities; these one and all contributed to Mr. Vanderlip's gradual growth and ultimate success. His inherent humility in seeking and following the wise direction of experienced men was a virtue of no little profit to him. These are truths that inescapably impress themselves upon the mind of the reader, though they are by no means thus catalogued by the writer. The latter tells the story simply, progressively, entertainingly just as it evolved consecutively through the years of Mr. Vanderlip's life. Students of the science of political economy will find abundant food for thoughtful reflection and study in the pages of this book. The general reader who wants serious subjects for perusal may here discover both delight and profit. The book is absorbing. There is an index.

M. J. S.

A SEARCH IN SECRET INDIA. By Paul Brunton. E. P. Dutton and Company. \$3.50.

THE bold curiosity and random luck of the journalist went with Mr. Brunton in his adventures into the cities and byways of India. He was ferreting out genuine Yogis blessed with authentic spirituality and seers teaching sacred esoteric doctrines. Spurring him on his adventures was the feverish hope of discovering a remedy of peace for his own soul, tortured by a skeptical outlook on the ways of God and the values of human living.

His findings in occultism and his accounts of dealings with various practitioners, Yogis, Messiahs, or holy men, will interest many who have a taste for the queer old world of India. What professional diagnosticians of hypnotic and occult phenomena will make of this book, I can but guess. But the book is not meant to be travelogue, but biography, an autobiography of discoveries in the sanctities of secret India.

Did Mr. Brunton find anything in his search? "I did arrive at a new acceptance of the Divine," he reports. Also, he summarizes some of his thoughts which brought him contentment during and after a condition of spiritual trance which culminated his long schooling under the Maharishee of Arunaschala. These "tablets of forgotten truth" certainly mark a progress from skepticism; but when their poetical hull is stripped away, they appear to be a very tiny kernel of commonplace thought. What is worse, these spiritual discoveries still keep the taint of subjectivism which caused the author so much pain at the dawn of his quest. All his weary waiting, and his lengthy travel, and disappointing encounters with fakes and faqueers and madmen were not worth this tiny result. An earnest Catholic in a three days' retreat usually gains better results than this adventurer found in return for his huge outlay of time, money, and humiliation.

B. W.

Communications

Letters to ensure publication should not, as a rule, exceed 500 words. The editors are not responsible for opinions expressed in this department. No attention will be paid to anonymous communications.

Plebiscite Messages

To the Editor of AMERICA:

It is a pedagogical principle, I think, that the best way to know is to weigh and judge for oneself. I think that AMERICA has most sagaciously adopted that principle in its present plebiscite of Catholic authors. I am convinced that AMERICA has here launched a project that would not only be productive of much stimulation of thought and active interest for the present but (far more important) will rivet attention on the Catholic literary interests and achievements (so well advocated at all times by AMERICA) for the future. This is the best thing that could have been done to bring the tremendous significance of the Catholic literary revival to the acquaintance of the greatest number of people. My sincere congratulations to AMERICA for the very psychological and timely move!

Mineola, L. I.

LOUIS J. FAERBER, S.M.

To the Editor of AMERICA:

Inciting Catholics to a real and active interest in Catholic literature and litterateurs is always commendable. For many years AMERICA has done this consistently and Catholics of America owe their vote of thanks to our alert Catholic weekly for this emulating service.

I am a member of the Calvert Circle, a small literary group of Wilmington, Del. When announcement was made of the proposed plebiscite we were delighted with the practical method of procedure, and much lively discussion has followed. The controversy resulting from differences of opinion about the candidates should make the whole country plebiscite-conscious, and we eagerly scanned your columns for the reactions. So far not a letter has appeared. With the Catholic revival in England, and the Catholic emergence in this country, our tongues should be loosed. Why this silence on the part of the voters? This is no time for silence.

An examination of the card catalog of our public library is disheartening. If the plebiscite results in placing only twenty-five of the candidates in our public libraries, it will have given us more reason to be grateful to Sister Mary Joseph who planted the acorn and to AMERICA for watering it. We should welcome an open forum of this campaign.

Wilmington, Del

MARY MCCONAGHY.

To the Editor of AMERICA:

Who are the Catholic literary immortals? Who will make the Academy of AMERICA? Whose names shall appear in the index of the "History of Catholic Literature" of tomorrow, as having been, if not classic writers, at least contributors to the Catholic literary impulse? This cry of the heralds should bring out all the loyal and faithful subjects of the Catholic literary nobility armed with pens, pencils, and typewriters, and like a mighty army may they mail back to AMERICA the glove of her challenge. This is our hope.

Familiar names eddy through our consciousness like wind-whirled leaves. It was once upon a time, not so long ago, that we went out hunting for Catholic authors. We followed dim lanterns, flickering gleams, and winced under the infrequent floodlights of advertising. We grew to admire and to feel proud of the scholars, the propagandists, the essayists, and ballad singers, whom we found to be of our household.

Montpelier, Vt.

VOTER FROM VERMONT.

Chronicle

Home News.—President Roosevelt arrived at Warm Springs, Ga., on November 21. He almost immediately began conferences on the budget with Chairman Buchanan of the House Appropriations Committee and other advisers. On November 26 he announced the pruning of \$400,000,000 from the requests of the regular governmental departments for the next fiscal year. Also on November 26 administration officials in Washington emphatically expressed determination to maintain the Government's neutrality policy, regardless of what the League of Nations or other countries might do. On November 22 the shipping industry was warned by the Department of Commerce to conform to the policies of the Administration regarding the shipment of war materials. The Government is the industry's principal creditor, and the letter was addressed to ship owners and mortgagors of ships. On November 22 the Securities and Exchange Commission announced that it would not now seek the enforcement of the criminal penalties of the Public Utilities Holding Company Act. On November 23 in Wilmington, Del., and on November 25 in New York, suits were filed in Federal court to test the constitutionality of the Act. On November 26 the SEC filed a bill of complaint in Federal court in New York against the Electric Bond and Share Company and five affiliated holding companies, in an effort to reduce the injunctions being sought against the Act. Suit to stop operation of the Guffey coal-stabilization legislation was filed on November 21 by the Pittsburgh Coal Company. The American Telephone and Telegraph Company and twenty-eight of its affiliates began suit in New York on November 22 to enjoin the Federal Communications Commission from enforcing its order to create a uniform system of accounts for major telephone corporations throughout the United States. On November 25 the United States Supreme Court temporarily enjoined Government collection of processing taxes upon eight Louisiana rice millers, pending a decision on whether the lower courts can legally bar such collections under the revised AAA. The Chamber of Commerce of the United States declared on November 25 that overwhelming opposition to recent Federal legislative trends had been shown by its referendum. In a statement on November 22, Marriner S. Eccles, Governor of the Federal Reserve Board, gave notice that recent stock-market activities were regarded as relatively safe and healthful, and that the Government does not intend to put on the "boom" brakes. On November 25 the Department of Commerce stated that unsafe ocean-going vessels carrying passengers under the American flag were being quietly required to be remodeled for safety. On November 23 John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, resigned as vice president of the American Federation of Labor. The China Clipper, a giant air liner, opened trans-Pacific air-mail service on November 22. It left Alameda, Cal.,

on that day and arrived in Manila without mishap on November 29.

Mexican Events.—Twenty-five persons were arrested in Mexico City on November 23 and held incommunicado. José Serrano, president of the League for the Defense of Religious Liberty, was among those arrested. General Gonzalez, chief of the Federal District police, charged them with instigating the campaign against Socialistic education. Twelve of those arrested were later released. On November 21, after the fighting between Gold Shirts and Communists the preceding day, the Mexican Senate appointed a committee to ask President Cárdenas to dissolve the Gold Shirts as being completely Fascist, opposed to the interests of Mexican Labor, and against the ideals of the Mexican revolution. It was reported on November 18 that the Governor of Querétaro would allow the re-opening of churches closed by the former Governor, and had authorized a priest for each municipality.

French Cabinet Crisis.—While elaborate police and military measures were taken against street demonstrations, the Chamber of Deputies met on November 28 after a recess of five months. A serious crisis faced Premier Laval, and observers were predicting the imminent fall of his Government. One factor was the rising demand, stimulated greatly by the Socialists, for the dissolution of Colonel de La Roque's Croix de Feu. The other factor was the threat to the franc, again precipitated by the alarming outflow of French gold during the past month. The Bank of France, in an attempt to check the flight, had raised the rate on loans and discounts three times within twelve days. Premier Laval's job was to convince the Deputies that his government-by-decree and his economy measures had been successful. M. Laval agreed to hear two interpellations from the Chamber on his financial policies, but insisted that discussion of Fascist issues must be postponed. On debate of this proposal, the Chamber's vote favored the Premier 345 to 225. This was taken as a vote of confidence in the Laval Government.

Ethiopian War.—According to reports from Addis Ababa, the Italian southern army, which had hitherto been almost unopposed in its drive from the Somaliland towards Jijiga and the railroad, was in full retreat. Following the recent reverse at Anele Fascist troops fell back. Two days later the towns of Gerlogubi and Gerlohai were retaken by the Ethiopians. Italian troops, if these reports were to be credited, had been thrown back to the position they held a month and a half ago. Moreover in the North the sniping tactics of Haile Selassie's forces were becoming more successful and serious interference with the lines of communications seemed to explain the sudden stoppage of the northern army's advance.

Oil Crisis.—Both Russia and Rumania, the main sources of oil to Italy, announced last week that they were ready to impose embargoes on the commodity when-

ever all the other producers, including both members and non-members of the League, did the same. This gave distinct impetus to the movement towards prohibiting the essential war materials of oil, steel, and coal that proved to be last week's chief source of interest in the European situation. Geneva's Committee of Eighteen, scheduled to meet last Friday to approve the embargo, postponed their gathering, however, at the request of Premier Laval, busy with the internal crisis in France. Two features of the situation were being emphasized by observers: first, that Italy's war efforts would collapse within a few months if her supply of oil were cut off, and second, that an embargo by Geneva on this essential would drive Italy into a withdrawal from the League of Nations. In Washington the Administration insisted that it would maintain its previous neutrality policy; while normal sales to Italy would go unchallenged, the Administration would continue to discourage all extraordinary imports of oil, steel, etc.

Autonomy in North China.—On November 25 the autonomy movement in North China was revived by the proclamation of the independence of a large area of the Eastern Hopei Province. The proclamation was made by Yin Ju-keng, Administrative Commissioner of the North China demilitarized zone. The new Government embraces the eighteen counties making up the demilitarized zone, including several in Chahar and several that project southward from the zone and form a wedge between Peiping and Tientsin. It was understood that the Central Government would fight the Northern secession. Shanghai dispatches announced that a parley between local officials and the Tokyo envoy was being arranged. Eiji Amau, Tokyo's Foreign Office spokesman, warned Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, financial expert of the British Foreign Office, not to interfere with the autonomy movement in North China. At the same time he accused the British Government of hampering Japan's conciliatory policy toward China and of encouraging the anti-Japanese faction at Nanking.

Revolt in Brazil.—At the request of President Vargas and the Cabinet, Congress on November 25 voted martial law for sixty days. The occasion was a revolutionary outbreak inspired by Communists in the States of Pernambuco and Rio Grande do Norte. Following fighting in both Provinces unofficial reports stated that in the State of Pernambuco 100 rebels had been killed and 300 prisoners taken. On November 26 the revolt there was declared crushed, but Natal, capital of the State of Rio Grande do Norte, was still entirely controlled by the rebels. The leader of the revolt was said to be Luiz Carlos Prestes, a Soviet agent and former army officer, who has been residing in Argentina since the unsuccessful 1922 revolt.

Anglo-Irish Agreement Reported.—A special cable to the New York Times on November 27 reported that as an aftermath of the appointment of Malcolm Mac-

Donald as Minister of Dominions in the British Cabinet, the *Irish Independent* was featuring a story purporting to be proposals for settlement of the Anglo-Irish dispute. The *Independent*, known to be close to President De-Valera, states that the terms for settlement include a "republican" form of government for the Free State and treaty association with the British Commonwealth. It adds that a scheme for the association of the Free State and Northern Ireland, which it is hoped eventually will lead to a federal association and the creation of a modern efficient Free State navy, has also been formulated. A few days previously the Free State accepted the invitation of Great Britain to attend the forthcoming Naval Conference. The scheme reported in the *Irish Independent* also envisages evacuation by British forces of Queenstown and Berehaven. Great Britain, it is understood, is prepared to sell the Free State about ten warships for approximately £5,000,000. The story in the *Independent* was considered to have more significance since it was frankly stated in Government circles that the British displacement of J. H. Thomas as Dominion Minister was regarded by the Free State as a peace gesture. That the British forces should be withdrawn from Free State territory and that there should be no Governor-General or oath of allegiance have been cardinal points of an Irish settlement. These seem to be covered in the phrase "republican form of government" mentioned by the *Independent*. The suggested agreement seems to include, according to the *Times* cable, cancellation of the Free State debt to Great Britain.

Nazis Raid Bishop's Office.—Secret police ransacked the administrative offices of Count Conrad von Preysing, Catholic Bishop of Berlin. They seized numerous documents, and later arrested Msgr. Banasch and Father Boese, secretary to the Bishop. Dr. Peter Legge, Bishop of Meissen, was sentenced to pay a fine of 100,000 marks. His incarceration to date canceled 40,000 marks. He must pay 60,000 marks or remain in prison three more months. Bishop Legge declared: "As a German Bishop I hereby solemnly declare before my conscience and before my God I am innocent." The Bishop's brother, Fr. Theodor Legge, and Fr. Wilhelm Soppa were sentenced to five and three years respectively. Grants of State funds to Catholic private schools were to be withdrawn, according to well-authenticated information. It was estimated that up to the present date Catholic Orders have been fined 5,000,000 marks. Many institutions would be forced to close, it was said. All Catholic libraries in Munich were closed by the police.

Nazi Grafters.—According to information from official sources, Walther Schulze, aide of Goebbels and important Nazi functionary, was relieved of his duties and faced trial charged with financial irregularities. Similar charges against another Nazi official were being investigated, unofficial reports indicated. Allegations of corruption within the Nazi party were becoming serious. Chancellor Hitler received French Ambassador Francois-

Poncet for a two-hour conference. After the conference, the German Foreign Office and the French Embassy issued an identical communiqué which said: "The conversation, the object of which was the general political situation, was characterized by a friendly spirit and offered an opportunity to ascertain the good will of both Governments." The conversations were said to have included the entire range of problems affecting Germany and France. The Ambassador called on Chancellor Hitler on the initiative of the French Government. The incident indicated, it was felt, a change in French policy toward Germany.

Hitler Laws Affect Jesuits.—Dispatches from The Hague blamed the German money laws for financial troubles from which the German Jesuit seminary at Valkenburg, Dutch Limburg, is suffering. Because of the German money "blockade" the seminary is deprived of normal financial relations with Germany and so finds great difficulty not only in maintaining its library and scientific departments and paying taxes to the Dutch Government but even in supplying the necessities of its 250 students. The situation prompted the Most Rev. William Lemmens, Bishop of Roermond, to invite a special Sunday collection for the benefit of the stricken seminary and to authorize the authorities to collect contributions of food in the diocese. It will be recalled that the seminary was erected in the course of the Bismarck Kulturkampf when the Jesuits were expelled from Germany. Although they were subsequently permitted to return the seminary at Valkenburg has continued to train students in philosophy and theology for the Lower Rhine province.

Stalin Eulogizes Increased Production.—A fervent tribute to the alleged phenomenal advances made by the Stakhanov system, so titled after a young coal miner of the Don Basin, Alexei Stakhanov, was pronounced by Joseph Stalin, Soviet dictator, and published November 21. The method has been described as a way of increasing production by "rationalization of movements," establishing new norms and production plans. The movement began in the field of coal mining, machine and shoe production. Closing November 21 a congress of 2,500 "Stakhanovites" was held in Moscow, on which occasion Stalin spoke, stating that the progress of the movement was bringing about radical improvement in the life of the workers, by making production easy, and thus hastening the advent of Communism, in which each man would receive according to his needs. Much display was made of fancy dry-goods and clothing purchase by the Stakhanov delegates and their wives. On November 21 a new world altitude record for airplanes was claimed by Vladimir K. Kokinaki, young Soviet pilot, who rose 47,806 feet above Moscow.

George II Enthroned.—Ending his twelve-year exile King George II of Greece on November 25 became the first of the monarchs who lost their thrones as the result

of the World War to be restored. Athens gaily celebrated his return. In a proclamation he protested his readiness to place all his experience and energy at the service of the people without any exceptions. "I discard," he said, "the past and am determined to obtain absolute equality for all. I wish to establish national unity and close and firm cooperation of all Greeks under my leadership and guidance." Provisionally Marshal Kondylis was retained as Premier, and the King decorated him with the Grand Cross of Greece. The King also conferred with other leaders but was uncommunicative about his plans.

Peru-Ecuador Border Dispute.—Charging that Ecuadorean cavalry and police had invaded the Peruvian Province of Tumbes, the Lima Government strengthened the local garrison. This action brought a protest from Guayaquil, in reply to which the Peruvian Government stated that the reinforcements were a precaution in view of the violation of Peruvian territory by Ecuadorean authorities. The Government further requested that Ecuador take immediate measures to prevent "a repetition of acts capable of compromising the friendly relations between the two countries." The frontier had long been a bone of contention between the two republics. A secret session of Congress opened at Lima on November 14 at which the boundary question was reported to have been discussed. At a public session later the trade treaty with Chile which makes mutual tariff concessions on many commodities of the two nations was approved forty-six to twenty-one.

Liberals Win Quebec.—Quebec's Provincial election favored the Liberal Government led by Premier Tascheru, though only by a slim majority. The Opposition won forty-two seats. It was the closest election in Quebec's political history and broke the long series of crushing Liberal majorities since 1897. The Legislature has been called for January 7 when the powerful Opposition facing the Government will include a number of men who have made their mark in the Province.

After the lapse of a week, John LaFarge's series on "The Catholic Reply to Communism" will be resumed. After "The Challenge of the Mind" and "The Defense of the Virtues" he will treat of the future prospect in "The Test of Institutions."

Held over from this week will be G. K. Chesterton's article, by arrangement with the London *Universe*, "The Heretic."

The name of Thomas Copley is an illustrious one in American Catholic annals. Few, however, remember his family connection with St. Thomas More. The story will be told by Noel Macdonald Wilby in "St. Thomas More and America."

The bi-millenary celebration of the poet Horace will be celebrated next week in due fashion by Dr. John J. Savage, of Fordham University, in "Horace and Modern Education."